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20 June 1961

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: The Forthcoming Air Show in Moscow

1. The Aviation Day show which the Soviets have scheduled

for 9 July will be the first Soviet air show since 1957. All indications are that the Soviets will make it as impressive as they can. Rehearsals started six weeks before the scheduled date of the show, there has been considerable press buildup including a preview for the foreign press, and there are indications that as many as 300-500 aircraft may participate.

2. The rehearsals thus far have included several new models of military aircraft and aircraft armament, developed since 1957 and therefore not previously displayed. The most significant are bombers and air-to-surface missiles carried by bombers:

(a) BOUNDER -- one seen in rehearsals, also pictured in Soviet press. This four-jet, modified delta-winged aircraft of heavy bomber size and weight was first seen at Moscow/Fili in 1958, and a later modification was seen in 1961. We have noted this in our estimates, saying that it appeared to have a high-speed design

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but lacked the necessary power and range for supersonic intercontinental missions. The key question will be whether the power plant has been improved.

(b) BLINDER -- six seen. This twin jet, swept-wing medium bomber with supersonic "dash" capability was first seen at Kozan in early 1960, and we have estimated that it would enter operational units this year.

(c) New medium bomber -- five seen, but flight pattern of rehearsals indicates that nine may be shown. A very clean-looking aircraft, apparently with delta-winged supersonic design and two or possibly three engines which should give it Mach. 2 speed. Not previously known by intelligence. It could be a competitive design to the BLINDER -- if so, it looks superior to me, and looks like "best in show" among the bombers. This is the aircraft with engines in positions somewhat similar to those of the Caravelle, which Gen. Lee first suggested might be a supersonic transport.

(d) Possible new bomber or interceptor -- one seen in most recent rehearsal, but no photos yet. May have a single, very high-thrust engine. Not previously known by intelligence, although we have had evidence that Soviets were working on engines in the 40,000 lb. thrust class.

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(e) AS-2 anti-ship missile -- 15 missiles which may be the 100 m. m. AS-2 were seen, one each on modified RANGERs. This is the supersonic air-to-surface missile developed to replace the old 55 m. m. subsonic "Katyusha" missile. We have estimated that RANGER units of Naval Aviation are equipped with it.

(f) AS-3 missile for land targets -- 15 missiles which may be the 350 m. m. AS-3 were seen, one each on modified RANGERs. We know of the development of AS-3 and have estimated that RANGERs are equipped with it.

3. A number of other interesting aircraft will be in the show, including a large "convertiplane" called HODP (apparently designed for both level flight and vertical takeoff and landing), a jet-propelled version of the Soviet Navy's flying-boat patrol aircraft, possibly also a helicopter bigger than any we have seen before, and very likely some new fighters. Virtually all the fighters seen in rehearsals thus far have been of known types, but a probable rocket-boostered fighter was seen twice. This could be the aircraft for which the USSR claimed a 94,000 foot altitude record in 1959.

4. I agree with General Melnik's assessment that this show confirms that "the Soviets have a strong, continuing interest in the development and production of manned aircraft, and that they will rely

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an aircraft-missile mix for the foreseeable future." With respect to forces for long range attack, the recently-completed NIK II-8-61 says (Conclusion 7) that "the Soviet long range striking forces thus comprise a mix of bombers, missiles, and submarines, but their development in the next five years will be paced largely by the growth of ICBM and other missile forces." The USSR is undoubtedly seeking high-performance aircraft to operate in conjunction with missile attack, and the forthcoming show will demonstrate the best they have come up with so far in their R&D efforts.

b. The prototypes displayed in previous shows have not always been selected by the USSR for quantity production and operational use. An estimate on this question will require detailed analysis of the performance of the aircraft shown, and hopefully additional evidence on production and deployment. Meanwhile, the massive display on 9 July will be used by Soviet spokesmen and propaganda to reinforce their claim of superior military strength, despite the derogatory remarks Chernenko has made about aircraft in recent years.

c. I am attaching photos of the aircraft referred to in this memorandum, in the order in which they were mentioned. Most of

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These were sent to you by General Stoertz. This memorandum was prepared at the request of the DDCI and with CIA.

Howard Stoertz, Jr.

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[redacted]

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